UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.3/1991/29
4 January 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION
Twenty-sixth session
4-13 February 1991
Item 13 (b) of the provisional agenda*

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND PLANNING

Plans of the international organizations in the area of statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report provides updated information on the future activities in statistics of the organizations of the United Nations system and of several international organizations outside the system. For most organizations, it covers the principal activities planned for the biennium 1992-1993. In the case of the Statistical Office, the plan period covered is 1992-1997. Only important planned changes in the activities of the organizations are discussed - that is, new activities, activities to be cancelled and activities to be modified significantly.

* E/CN.3/1989/1.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report provides the Commission with a summary of the future activities in statistics of the organizations of the United Nations system and several international organizations outside the system.

2. The report is of necessity selective in coverage, owing to the strict page limitation for sessional documents. For most of the organizations, the plan period is identified, but for some, no specific plan period is indicated. In the case of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, the new medium-term plan for 1992-1997 (A/45/6 (Prog. 24)) is before the Commission for discussion under agenda item 12 (c). A draft version of the plan (E/CN.3/1989/CRP.2) was discussed under agenda item 12 (c) at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission. The draft, revised to take into account the comments of the Commission, was then reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination during the first part of its thirteenth session and was endorsed by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session in resolution 45/253.

3. The general orientation of the future work of each organization remains largely unchanged from that set out in the previous report to the Commission. New activities and activities which have been cancelled or modified significantly are discussed. Routine, continuing activities, such as the issuance of recurrent publications, and other activities that have not changed since the twenty-fifth session of the Commission are not reported.

I. UNITED NATIONS

4. In light of the fact that the statistics portion of the new United Nations medium-term plan (A/45/6 (Prog. 24)) is before the Commission and will be considered under agenda item 12 (c), a full presentation of the plans for the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat has been deleted from this report. The work of the Statistical Office is covered under two organizational headings. Work in connection with subprogrammes 1-4 of the medium-term plan is presented under the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) (see sect. II-A below) and work carried out in connection with subprogramme 5 is presented under the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (see sect. II-B below).

A. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs: Statistical Office (1992-1997) 1/

5. Activities which have been cancelled or modified significantly are dealt with in the documents for individual fields of statistics which are before the Commission for discussion. Accordingly, the present report should be read in conjunction with the following documents: national accounts (E/CN.3/1991/5); harmonization of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances

of the National Economy (MPS) (E/CN.3/1991/13); service statistics (E/CN.3/1991/15); industrial statistics (E/CN.3/1991/18); civil registration and vital statistics systems (E/CN.3/1991/19); price statistics (E/CN.3/1991/19); environment statistics (E/CN.3/1991/23); general development and integration of methodological work (E/CN.3/1991/24); and updated information on the work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat (E/CN.3/1991/30). In addition, reference may be made to the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat for 1992-1993 and related information" (E/CN.3/1991/31).

B. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (1992-1997)

6. The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development has overall responsibility for the implementation of technical co-operation projects in statistics and statistical data processing shown under subprogramme 5 of the new medium-term plan (A/45/6 (Prog. 24)). The Statistical Office continues to provide substantive support to the Department for these activities.

7. Activities which have been cancelled or significantly modified are reflected in the reports of the Secretary-General on technical co-operation activities in the fields of statistics rendered by the United Nations system, other international organizations and countries (E/CN.3/1991/25), and the National Household Survey Capability Programme (E/CN.3/1991/26); updated information on the work of the Statistical Office (E/CN.3/1991/30). In addition, reference may be made to the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed work programme of the Statistical Office for 1992-1993 (E/CN.3/1991/31).

C. Economic Commission for Europe (1992-1997)

8. The socio-economic changes in Eastern Europe have prompted a fundamental review and a major re-orientation of the work programme of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in the field of statistics. The results of the review process undertaken by the plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians in June 1990 are reflected in changes concerning the structure of the programme elements, their priorities, and the role the Conference intends to play in regional statistical co-operation.

9. Regional statistical co-operation and all matters affecting the organization and operation of statistical services were integrated into a single subprogramme with the work directly supervised by heads of national statistical offices in the ECE region. A new subprogramme on statistical information technology was created, and it is expected that the issues of a harmonized design and development of statistical databases with a view to a facilitated electronic data interchange will probably occupy the forefront of the work in this field.

10. In determining priorities, the Conference decided to attach first priority to those programme elements in the fields of economic, social, demographic, environment and natural resource statistics, which are characterized by a pronounced developmental component. In concrete terms, this means that the Conference will continue to devote much of the resources at its disposal to environment and natural resource statistics. In addition, the development of internationally comparable service statistics, of business registers, and of statistics of the hidden and informal economic activities inside the production boundary of national accounts are currently envisaged to be given high priority. The Conference also recognized the importance of social and demographic statistics for measuring change in transition economies. Social repercussions of the transition process should be closely monitored, and it was agreed that future work by the Conference on social indicators should be urgently clarified.

D. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (1992-1997)

11. A basic strategy in the statistics subprogrammes for the biennium 1992-1993 will continue to be to assist the countries in strengthening and consolidating their statistical capacity. Due to the heterogeneity of the region, more careful attention will need to be given to the design of technical activities of interest to groups of countries identified by their statistical development needs, priorities and level of sophistication of statistical applications. The theme of human resources development will continue to be integrated into the subprogramme's activities, in conjunction with the work of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

12. The statistical implications of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade will be addressed. Increasing concern with the qualitative aspects of development, including social justice and the environment, will be reflected in the secretariat's activities, along with greater efforts for the measurement of living standards at the micro level. In view of growing concern at the depletion of natural resources assets in the region, special attention will be paid to environmental and natural resource accounting.

13. Among the newer areas of work will be the development of service statistics including the concepts, definitions, classifications and data collection methodologies, as well as the development of small areas statistics. The work on the International Comparison Project will continue to be supported, and issues relating to the management of statistical services will receive heightened attention during the 1992-1993 plan period.

14. Efforts will be made to introduce a new dissemination service through the provision of statistics on diskettes for microcomputers, and through other media. An ESCAP-wide statistical data base providing access to the United Nations data bases at New York and Geneva and those of other international agencies will be completed, given the availability of resources.

15. The secretariat's work on government sector computerization in the biennium 1992-1993 will be to continue to address the underlying policy and management issues and assist in the establishment of the requisite coherent, and complementary, organizational and technical infrastructures. At the regional level, it is envisaged that ESCAP will assume the role of focal point for the transfer between countries of the experience gained and the methodologies developed in public sector computerization, particularly through the organization of workshops and the establishment and maintenance of regional information technology networks.

E. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (1992-1997)

Subprogramme 1. Regional framework on statistical information

16. The main objectives pursued within this subprogramme during 1992-1993 will primarily be:

(a) To develop integrated statistical data bases for mainframe as well as microcomputers;

(b) To enhance data comparability by using the latest international classifications such as the SITC Rev.3, ISIC Rev.3, Harmonized System (HS) and Central Product Classification (CPC).

Subprogramme 2. Statistical development, statistical analysis and regional co-operation

17. The performance under this heading during the period 1992-1993 is to comply with the following concrete targets:

(a) Studies will be carried out on estimates of income distribution, poverty situations, labour and social indicators. Likewise, annual reports on the evolution of the social situation in Latin America and the Caribbean will be issued. For that purpose, ECLAC will continue developing statistical methods and techniques for the measurement of living conditions and will collaborate with the countries in strengthening the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) undertaken by the Statistical Office; equally, with the investigations of the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC);

(b) An evaluation will be done on the implementation of the new System of National Accounts (SNA) in Latin America and the Caribbean, pointing out difficulties and likely solutions. The conclusions of the work will be transmitted to the experts of the countries, aiming at a mutual achievement of the statistical techniques used in each country; at the same time, information will be given on the new recommendations that could emanate from the interinstitutional Working Group. This task implies organizing and co-ordinating country expert groups in different

areas of national accounts, in a way they can encounter, from a regional point of view, the numerous problems which no doubt will persist. On the other hand, once the information is organized according to the SITC Rev.3 and the ISIC Rev.3, a group of indicators will be prepared in each field in order to show the countries the usefulness of this type of information; to this regard, computing programmes will be designed to facilitate the use of data and will be supplied to the countries when required;

(c) In the field of technical co-operation, priority will be given to the development of household surveys; statistical organization, economic statistics and national accounts; and, transference and adjustment of computing systems in the statistical field.

F. Economic Commission for Africa (1992-1997)

18. The main activities in the area of general aspects of co-ordination and organization during the period 1992-1993 will include:

(a) The preparation and servicing of the seventh session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the eighth meeting of Directors of Centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA), and workshops on statistical computing and development of statistical data bases;

(b) Advisory missions to member States on statistical organization and on the development and maintenance of national statistical data bases;

(c) Publication of the African Statistical Yearbook, African Socio-economic Indicators and other current technical publications such as Integrated Social, Demographic, Environmental and Economic data; Statistical Newsletter; Directory of African Statisticians; Directory of EDP Centres and Experts in Africa etc.

19. For the period under consideration, the main activities in national accounts and economic statistics will involve:

(a) The preparation and the distribution to member states and other users of national series data and technical publications on national accounts, industry, international trade and industry;

(b) Servicing of seminars, workshops and working groups in the fields of national accounts, international trade and industry;

(c) Advisory missions to member States on improving the quality, coverage and methodology of their basis economic statistics and national accounts needed for development policy formulation and planning, and reducing the data gaps and time lags.

20. During the same period, the activities in the area of demographic, social, household and environment statistics will include the following:

(a) Publication of national series on demographic and social statistics, African Compendium on Environment Statistics;

(b) Preparation and development of technical publications and guidelines on concepts, definitions and classifications used in population censuses and demographic surveys in Africa; the applications and analysis of household survey data relevant to the African region and environmental accounting;

(c) Organization of an intergovernmental working group on social indicators framework of relevance to Africa;

(d) Advisory missions to member States on the organization, planning and conduct of population and housing censuses, household surveys and development of civil registration systems and vital statistics collection and for establishing or improving environment statistics in national statistical offices and for data collection.

G. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (1992-1997)

21. The main activities planned for 1992-1993 will include:

(a) A regional workshop on the revised SNA will be conducted in the second half of 1993;

(b) A study on social statistics in the ESCWA region will be prepared for the assessment of the present situation of these statistics and their future development;

(c) A regional seminar on vital registration and statistics will be held for officials responsible for registration and compilation of vital statistics in the region;

(d) A regional training workshop on industrial statistics is planned in 1993 in connection with the World Programme of Industrial Statistics;

(e) A programme for the development of environment statistics in the ESCWA region will be prepared for 1992-1993, including an expert group meeting to be held in 1993 to discuss, among other things, international guidelines and recommendations;

(f) The intergovernmental meeting of heads of central statistical organizations which will be held in 1993 to review the ESCWA statistical programme and to establish its main orientation.

H. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (1992-1997)

22. UNCTAD will continue to work in close collaboration with the Statistical Office and international agencies in refining and updating statistical methodologies and harmonizing economic classifications with a view to improving coverage, timeliness and level of details of trade reported by developing countries via the ASYCUDA project. For the purpose of the General System of Preferences, foreign trade data from developing countries are needed at a detailed level, preferably at the tariff-line level or in terms of the Harmonized System.

23. Further work is under way to link the comprehensive Economic Time Series to the data bases of other international agencies to facilitate access and exchange of data. UNCTAD is actively seeking to enlarge the number of developing countries that report private and public financial flows to other developing countries and agencies. UNCTAD will continue its efforts to improve the trade deflator system in particular with regard to manufactures originating in developing countries. The Commodity Price Bulletin, which is at present limited to primary commodities, will be enlarged to include energy prices as well as manufactured goods prices.

I. United Nations Children's Fund (Plan period not given)

24. Work in statistics will continue on UNICEF publications such as the The State of the World's Children and Statistics on Children in UNICEF Assisted Countries. The third edition of the UNICEF Statistics Pocketbook is expected to be released. Much of the ongoing work related to statistics will continue, though with some differing emphases. The major change in emphasis will occur in the monitoring of the well-being of children. The World Summit for Children, held in New York in September 1990 and attended by over 70 heads of State or Government, advocated that all countries adopt specific goals for children for the 1990s. Major goals delineated by the Summit included: reduction of under-five mortality; reduction of maternal mortality; reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition; universal access to safe drinking water and sanitary means of excreta disposal; universal access to basic education; reduction of adult illiteracy; and protection of children in especially difficult circumstances. Monitoring of progress towards these goals was also recognized by the Summit as a mandatory activity and countries were requested to establish the appropriate mechanisms for doing so. However, recognizing that many developing countries, particularly the least developed and the most indebted ones, will need substantial international support, the Summit Plan of Action explicitly identified the need for the United Nations to provide monitoring assistance to countries. As the world's lead agency for children, UNICEF is adapting itself to playing a major role in monitoring the well-being of children and the progress towards child related goals for the 1990s.

II. SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

A. International Labour Organisation (1992-1993)

25. The core activities of the Bureau of Statistics will concentrate on preparing reports and discussion papers for the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) which will be held in the autumn of 1992. Two meetings of experts will be organized in 1992 to examine the issues involved in the statistical measurement of informal sector employment and in the revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment. Another report and draft resolution will also be prepared on statistics of strikes and lockouts.

26. The Statistical Sources and Methods series will be continuously up-dated but will also be expanded to include topics not previously covered. The Bureau is considering the possibility of issuing a new edition of one volume every year at the same time as the Yearbook of Labour Statistics. The ILO intends in the course of 1992-93 to produce two new major volumes of sources and methods (in English); one will be on strikes and lockouts. The other will be on wages, hours of work and labour costs. Work will also start on compiling the methodological practices with respect to statistics of occupational injuries.

27. Special data bases will be developed to increase the capability of the Bureau to provide statistics, within and outside the Office, on topics which are essential but which cannot be regularly disseminated, such as informal sector employment, training and workers, public sector employment, statutory minimum wages, labour productivity.

28. Should additional resources become available, the Bureau will:

(a) Restructure the ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics in order to enhance the analytical use of the ILO data base and to collect more consistent data with a more complete coverage;

(b) Develop a system of cataloguing the contents of statistical publications in the ILO in order to exploit more systematically the wealth of statistical information that currently exists in the ILO library;

(c) Study the possibility of disseminating its labour statistics on CD-ROM;

(d) Investigate the replacement of data collection through questionnaires with more modern procedures (such as electronic data interchange or interactive questionnaire on floppy disks);

(e) Publish a supplement to ISCO 88 which would contain detailed descriptions of some 1,500 occupations and an updated and improved index of occupational titles;

(f) Publish a set of labour indicators relevant for monitoring employment and labour issues policies;

(g) Establish a centre for statistical services for in-house use.

B. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (1992-1993)

29. Emphasis will be given to the full development of the FAO World Agricultural Information Centre which will provide statistics of acceptable quality to users inside and outside FAO. This will take into consideration development in modern dissemination technology, comprehensive identification of users' data needs and in-depth appraisal of the quality and timeliness of the statistical information to be stored and retrieved by users.

30. Efforts to encourage developing countries to carry out their census of agriculture within the framework of the FAO Programme for the 1990 World Census of Agriculture will be intensified. Improved frames for agricultural censuses and surveys and use of network of microcomputers will be considered to improve data quality and timeliness.

31. With improvement in the financial situation, the following activities will be continued: trade matrices, animal feed balances, statistics on marketing costs and margins, development of a personal computer based data processing system, application of remote sensing for country-wide land use data, publication of the long-term series on per caput crop and livestock production and of the FAO statistical pocketbooks, average food balance sheets, manuals on livestock statistics, sampling techniques, land use statistics, and agricultural census methodology. Environment statistics related to agriculture will be a new programme element. Within the framework of the International Conference on Nutrition, to be held in Rome at the end of 1992, the Sixth World Food Survey will be published.

32. FAO will continue to co-operate with the United Nations National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) on the collection of food and agricultural data through household surveys and with the World Bank on alternative survey approaches for obtaining timely and reliable estimates of food production, especially in countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

C. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1990-1995)

33. Activities will aim at refining and updating methodologies which may be concerned - for example, with terminology, measurement, data identification, collection and processing. Manuals and guides will be brought up to date or prepared, while special efforts will be made to ensure wider application and implementation of UNESCO's standard-setting instruments concerning the collection of international statistics. Improvement in the dissemination of statistical data

and publications will concern the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook and other major publications, and will be achieved by making data from the UNESCO Statistical Data Bank available in either machine-readable format or through direct access to the data bank.

34. During the first phase of the Plan, investigations will be undertaken to identify and quantify additional key data on cultural "industries" and on research and development in higher education. During the second phase, in-depth surveys and studies to assess literacy levels and the practice of languages and sports will be envisaged, while statistical work regarding adult education and lifelong training of scientists and engineers will be begun during the third phase.

35. Co-operation with the United Nations system and other international organizations will be pursued, particularly in areas related to the consolidation of classification systems. Co-operation will also take place with the Statistical Office, to which UNESCO will provide inputs for subject areas coming within its fields of competence, as well as for the statistical component of the World Decade for Cultural Development. In accordance with the policy of the United Nations ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities concerning the non-duplication of data collection within the system, the regular exchange of data between UNESCO, the United Nations and other specialized agencies will be continued. Similarly, UNESCO will provide the statistical input to the United Nations programme on prospective studies. Finally, co-operation with governmental and non-governmental organizations will be maintained with a view to promoting the international collection and comparability of statistics relating to their respective fields of competence.

D. International Civil Aviation Organization
(Plan period not given)

36. Improvement in efficiency rather than expansion and diversification remains the principal goal of the Organization. Special emphasis will be placed on the application of advance technology to the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics, including the development of a data bank with world-wide accessibility. Estimates of airline traffic will be provided quarterly and eventually monthly, on a world-wide and regional basis.

37. With regard to assistance to member States, efforts to promote the regular collection, analysis and publication of civil aviation statistics at the national level will be intensified through a programme of training courses, visits to States, informal workshops and guidelines.

E. World Health Organization (1991-1993)

38. WHO will assist member States to carry out the second evaluation of the implementation of their health-for-all strategies in 1991. On the basis of these country reports, global and regional evaluations of progress with health-for-all

strategies will be prepared by the WHO secretariat. Responding to requests from many member States and various technical programmes, the Health Situation and Trend Assessment Programme will promote the strengthening of future trend assessment in the health field.

39. After endorsement by the World Health Assembly at its forty-third session, in May 1990, the three-volume set (tabular list, notes and instruction for use, and alphabetical index) of the Tenth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) will be prepared for printing and publication. ICD-10 will come into use as from 1 January 1993. In order to meet the needs of countries unable to implement the full provisions of ICD-10, a separate volume containing the three-character level of the classification with inclusion terms, exclusion notes and its own alphabetical index will also be published. The process of revising the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps (ICIDH), initiated in 1990, will lead to a revised version by 1993.

40. The World Health Statistics Quarterly and the World Health Statistics Annual will continue to publish information on the global health situation and trends. The Eighth Report on the World Health Situation will also be published, based on the data obtained from the second Health for All Evaluation. The Weekly Epidemiological Record will continue to publish periodic statistics on various topics.

41. The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases of WHO held a training course in the use of computers and software for statistics for East African participants in Zambia in September 1990. The Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction of WHO will continue its plan for strengthening biostatistics, epidemiological and data processing capabilities in countries with a training course in Africa on advanced methods in statistics and microcomputer applications. A programme on multicentre studies on contraceptive methods will be undertaken in China.

F. World Bank (Plan period not given)

42. The two major initiatives of the Bank in the area of integrated household surveys, the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) and the Social Dimensions of Adjustment project (SDA) will be pursued and expanded to cover additional countries. It is anticipated that SDA will be implemented in all of the 30 Sub-Saharan African countries that have joined the project. Particular emphasis will be placed on enhancing the capacity of member countries to carry out surveys by strengthening their institutional capacity.

43. In the context of strengthening the general statistical capacity of Sub-Saharan African countries, the Bank will undertake case studies and formulate appropriate proposals for medium-term development of national capacity. Working with other agencies, it will seek to put in place arrangements that promote more effective delivery of external technical inputs.

44. Methodological work related to the improvement of the international comparability of GNP estimates will be pursued. This will include work related to the possible use of ICP data. The conversion of MPS based estimates of national income to SNA aggregates will also be pursued.

45. Statistical work on environmental data will be pursued in two major directions. Experiments with environmentally adjusted national accounts will be done through country case studies. At the same time, the Bank will identify and collect appropriate environmental indicators for use in the context of operational and policy discussions with member countries.

46. The Bank's Debtor Reporting System will be supplemented by data from other agencies, including the Organisation of Economic Co-operation for Development and regional banks. The strengthening of national capabilities in recording, compiling, and reporting external-debt data will receive high priority.

47. Improved dissemination of data compiled by the Bank to member Governments will be a major activity. Data will be made available in a variety of forms, including CD-ROMS. For meeting the internal needs of the Bank staff, enhanced capacities will be put in place whereby staff will be able to access mainframe data, including metadata from linked personal computers now available to almost all Bank staff.

G. International Monetary Fund (1990-1995)

48. Technical co-operation in statistics will continue as a major activity of the work of the Bureau of Statistics of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is expected that more than 20 per cent of the economist staff resources of the Fund's Bureau of Statistics will be devoted to this activity, which will centre mostly on improving the statistical collection capabilities and methodological practices of developing countries. Priorities in this area will be centred on countries in which the statistical base is weak or where the data collection and reporting processes in the main fields of economic statistics are in need of review. Particular attention will be given to countries that have approached IMF with requests for the use of its financial resources.

49. In the area of data communications with member countries, IMF will seek out opportunities provided by advances in technolcgy to improve data reporting to the Fund via electronic data links. Efforts are under way to establish appropriate data interchange standards. Attention will be given to co-ordinating demands for data from member countries, both at the institutional level and in conjunction with other organizations, to facilitate reporting and avoid duplicative data reporting by member countries.

50. IMF will continue to be closely involved in the successful conclusion of the revision of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). In close collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the World Bank and the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, IMF will participate actively in the

final round of expert group meetings and the subsequent review meetings, and will aim to contribute as appropriate to the draft document to be presented to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-sixth session, in 1991.

51. In association with work on the SNA, the period 1990-1995 is expected to be an active time for IMF in reviewing the statistical methodologies in those fields coming within its purview. This includes especially the preparation of a revised Balance of Payments Manual (the most recent, fourth, edition was issued in 1977) and a guide to money and banking statistics. IMF is also undertaking a study on the measurement of international capital flows as a follow-up to the study on the statistical discrepancy in world current account balances (the Esteva Report) that was published in 1987.

H. Universal Postal Union (1991-1994)

52. Statistical activities at the UPU have the following broad objectives:

(a) Systematically to record data on postal traffic volumes so as to deduce general trends and make extrapolations for the future;

(b) To collect information on staffing patterns and volumes, financial operating performance, performance of the postal financial services, technical means etc. of UPU member countries;

(c) To determine and quantify the level of services available to the public;

(d) To determine the evolution of the postal services in general over a period of time;

(e) To promote the use of statistics by postal administrations as an effective instrument for managing and planning their services;

(f) To determine the direction and volume of technical assistance to UPU member countries.

53. At UPU headquarters, statistical work is based on data received from Governments in response to an annual questionnaire. After verification and computation, this data is published in the Postal Services Statistical Yearbook. Reflecting the concern on the part of some member countries, a study is now under way to further simplify and rationalize the structure of these statistics. A three-yearly report on the development of the postal services (covering the situation up to 1989) will be published in 1991, and a similar five-yearly report covering the period 1987-1991 will be published in 1993/94.

54. Further, given the general demand on the part of UPU member countries, it has been decided to install a computerized data base at UPU headquarters. The data base is expected to become fully operational from 1993 onwards. It is expected

that the data base will go a long way in improving the level of the postal services in general.

55. Finally, expert missions and study fellowships relating to statistics have been a usual part of the technical assistance calendar, and it is expected that they will continue to be so.

I. International Telecommunication Union (1991-1993)

56. The ongoing activities of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with regard to telecommunication statistics will be oriented towards:

(a) Improving the accuracy, utility and timeliness for collection, processing and dissemination of reliable statistical information concerning global telecommunication;

(b) Analysing the information collected in new and innovative ways to show the trends of telecommunication development in the world;

(c) Continuing the publication of the Yearbook of Telecommunication Statistics, with fuller statistics relating to network growth, services and applications, operations and providers, and economics;

(d) Introducing new telecommunication technologies and new statistics information systems;

(e) Establishing a unit within ITU for co-ordination of telecommunication statistics.

J. World Intellectual Property Organization (Plan period not given)

57. Technical publications issued in 1988: WIPO, Industrial Property Statistics, 1985, which incorporated the improvements and changes outlined in document E/CN.3/1987/22, reviewed at the previous session of the Commission.

K. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (1991-1995)

58. The programme of work of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) calls for relatively few additions or major changes in the period 1991-1995. Minor changes in orientation of priority, including the following:

(a) The collection of detailed information in order to improve international comparability and timeliness;

(b) Expansion of collection activities to include both official and unofficial information which can serve as investment guides and for monitoring industrial operations;

(c) Dissemination of results through recurrent publications and external distribution of industrial statistics in machine-readable form;

(d) Provision of technical assistance, on request, to assist developing countries in areas of data processing, storage and retrieval in connection with industrial census, surveys, data analysis and related activities.

L. International Atomic Energy Agency (Plan period not given)

59. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) collects, processes and distributes statistics whenever necessary for the execution of its programmes. As part of its research and isotopes programme, IAEA maintains statistics on nuclear physics and on research reactor utilization for distribution to member States. As part of its nuclear energy programme, statistics are maintained on nuclear power plant operations and energy economics. As part of its nuclear safety programme, statistics are maintained on incidents at nuclear power statistics. No new areas of statistical collection are planned. The emphasis in the immediate future will be on providing more comprehensive statistics in a more flexible manner (in some cases machine-readable) to member States.

M. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (1991-1993)

60. Between now and 1993, emphasis will be given to the data required for customs tariff assessments resulting from the current round of negotiations as well as meeting the internal needs of GATT.

61. A project of major importance will continue to be the Integrated Data Base which is expected to be operational in 1991. It contains tariff line data on imports, tariffs and quantitative restrictions. The tariff lines are based on the Harmonized System. Over time, it is expected that the Integrated Data Base will be expanded to include exports and other categories of non-tariff measures on which information is supplied by contracting parties.

62. Another project is the GATT Data Base on International Trade in Services using information from the International Monetary Fund, OECD, the International Labour Office, the (United Nations Secretariat) Statistical Office and national sources. Efforts will concentrate on improving the coverage in terms of both economic series and country detail and on improving the comparability of data.

63. Continued support will be given, in collaboration with other international organizations, to studies in methodology regarding international trade statistics and related subjects.

III. OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (1991-1993)

64. The following areas and topics of co-operation have been established between member countries of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in the field of statistics in 1991 and in the subsequent few years:

(a) Integration of SNA and MPS; development of the methodology of computation of GNP and GDP;

(b) Harmonization of the CMEA Classification of Branches of National Economy (CBNE) and the United Nations ISIC;

(c) Improvement in the international trade statistics, taking into account United Nations international recommendations in this area of statistics;

(d) Development of the methodology of inflation estimates;

(e) Development of the methodology of price indexes;

(f) Unemployment estimate methodology;

(g) Methods of statistical surveys of internal markets in the interested CMEA member countries: to what extent the demands on consumer goods and services are met; the quality of goods and services consumed;

(h) Publishing of statistical yearbooks and bulletins: Statistical Yearbook of CMEA Member Countries, Statistical Handbook of CMEA, the statistical abstract "International trade of CMEA member countries", quarterly statistical bulletins containing data on national economy and international trade, the information bulletin "Co-operation of the CMEA member countries in the field of statistics", and international comparison of basic economic indicators of national economic development of the CMEA member countries and Yugoslavia, 1988 data;

(i) Development of analytical statistical publications on the economies of CMEA member countries in 1990, the environment in CMEA member countries and efforts to protect it in 1990, co-operation of CMEA member countries and economic growth in Viet Nam, Cuba and Mongolia, further improvements in data processing systems in the CMEA member countries.

B. Statistical Office of the European Communities (1991)

65. The year 1991 will see a speeding-up in implementation of sectoral statistics programmes related to the objectives of the Single Act. Focus will be on gradually setting up the General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities (NACE) and on pilot surveys to test the new method for elaborating statistics on intra-Community trade. Activities will also be devoted to creating a register of European enterprises and adopting PRODCOM, the standardized classification of community industrial production.

66. Economic and social cohesion will be encouraged by revising the economic accounting system to produce a more uniform arrangement at Community and national levels and creating a system of regionally comparable statistical indicators as a reference tool for allocating regional funds. The increased pace of financial and monetary integration will be reflected in activities aimed at creating new community indicators to replace national indicators on money supply, capital flows and the balance of payments.

67. In environment statistics, physical pollution indicators will be introduced and methodological studies on the economic impact of environmental protection measures will be undertaken. A new computerized commercial and tariff statistics management system to follow up the GATT negotiations and the Uruguay Round will be introduced. In that framework, insufficiencies of the system of statistics on international transactions in services will be addressed.

68. Technical co-operation in statistics with the least developed countries will continue. In addition, due to the recent political developments in Eastern Europe, a co-operation programme with the countries of that region will be set up.

69. Finally, with a view to easing the burden which statistical surveys impose on enterprises, EUROSTAT has undertaken work on a computerized message system (EDIFACT-STATISTIQUE), the aim being to elaborate norms and systems for using the information processed by or exchanged among enterprises to produce rapid and comparable statistics.

IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

A. Inter-American Statistical Institute (1990-1993)

70. According to the new organization of the Institute, its activities for the period 1990-1995 will be oriented towards complementing the work carried out by other organizations concerning the development of governmental statistics in the American region and promoting the development of academic and professional statistical activities, through scientific publications and technical meetings.

71. Regarding governmental statistics, the Institute will co-operate with the national statistical offices of the American region, particularly in their activities related to those of the Inter-American Statistical Conference. At the same time, co-operation with ECLAC, FAO, and other organizations of the United Nations family will continue in the fields of censuses, household surveys, and agricultural statistics.

72. A seminar every year or every second year, depending upon the availability of additional sponsorship, will be organized within the framework of the series of seminars on statistical methods, initiated in 1987. The proceedings of these seminars will constitute an important part of the programme of scientific publications.

73. A series of sessions on statistical computing were programmed as part of DATA/90 (Miami, December 1990), and a seminar on statistical methods in business and actuarial sciences will be conducted in Mexico in September 1991.

V. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

74. The Commission may wish to comment on the plans of the organizations in the area of statistics, taking into account, inter alia, the implications of ongoing national statistical work for the future plans of the organizations.

Notes

1/ Refers to the plan period covered by narrative description.